

South Dakota National Guard

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Training enhances SD Guard's Forward Support Company readiness

By Staff Sgt. Christina Sihrer
153rd Engineer Battalion

CAMP RIPLEY, Minn. - Members of the South Dakota Army National Guard's Forward Support Company, 153rd Engineer Battalion of Parkston and Huron are participating in eXportable Combat Training Capability, a large scale training exercise, at Camp Ripley, July 5-19.

National Guard units from all over the United States, including numerous ones from South Dakota, are participating in the two-week event.

While at the XCTC, units participate in training lanes leadership feels will test their Soldiers. Driving in a tactical convoy or performing first aid on a wounded Soldier are just a few examples of tasks Soldiers can be evaluated on.

The FSC recently participated in tactical convoy and vehicle recovery lanes. The Soldiers prepare for the training lanes just like they would prepare for real world missions, doing pre-combat checks and inspections of themselves and their vehicles. They perform battle drills - different scenarios that may take place while on a mission, which prepare Soldiers for different situations they may face on the battlefield.

During one training lane, the company recovered a Humvee that had broken down due to mechanical troubles. The unit has recovery vehicles that make it possible for them to recover something as small as a Humvee or as large as a M1A1 Abrams Tank. The FSC can recover any piece of military equipment the Army puts on the battlefield.

"This was a great lane for us to use our skills that we have learned over the years as a Forward Support Company," said 1st Sgt. John Dornbusch. "We have many Soldiers who have been doing this a long time, and they are great at what they do. These lanes helped us to fine tune those skills that will be beneficial for real world events on and off the battlefield."

During the lanes, trainers set up different scenarios for the Soldiers to react to. On one of the lanes, an improvised explosive device was placed before the FSC's arrival in hopes the Soldiers who see it take appropriate actions and call up the proper reports. This can be very beneficial on the battlefield as it can show trends, attacks and events on certain routes.

In addition to the training lanes, the FSC provides fuel and maintenance support for themselves and other SDARNG's units. They also provide food for the majority of the Soldiers from 153rd Engineer Battalion participating in the exercise. More than 300 hot meals were served by their mess section twice a day from their containerized kitchen.

The FSC's mission is to provide direct and expected combat sustainment support to engineer battalions, including recovery support and field level maintenance. Historically, the FSC has shown an extremely high level of proficiency on this mission reflected by two consecutive Superior Unit Awards and receiving the Army Award for Maintenance Excellence.

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High resolution photos are available at www.flickr.com/photos/southdakotationalguard



150711-Z-ZZ999-001: Members of the distribution platoon in the South Dakota Army National Guard's Forward Support Company, 153rd Engineer Battalion of Parkston and Huron participate in a tactical convoy lane during their annual training at Camp Ripley, Minn., July 11, 2015. Units from all over the United States, including numerous ones from South Dakota, are participating in the two-week large scale training exercise. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Tabitha Carr/ Released)



150711Z-ZZ999-002: U.S. Army Pfc. Ryan Foster, top, and Sgt. Joseph Reiser, both members of the South Dakota Army National Guard's Forward Support Company, 153rd Engineer Battalion pull security during a tactical convoy lane at Camp Ripley, Minn., July 11, 2015. Units from all over the United States, including numerous ones from South Dakota, are participating in the two-week large scale training exercise. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Tabitha Carr/ Released)



150711Z-ZZ999-004: U.S. Army Spc. Lindsey Graber holds an IV bag for Sgt. Lee Gregerson, both members of the South Dakota Army National Guard's Forward Support Company, 153rd Engineer Battalion during a medical training lane during an exercise at Camp Ripley, Minn., July 11, 2015. Units from all over the United States, including numerous ones from South Dakota, are participating in the two-week large scale training exercise. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Tabitha Carr/ Released)

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